

USAID/GEO

GUYANA ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Expanding Export Opportunities to the U.S.: Meeting U.S. Phytosanitary Requirements

**Trip Report
November 18 – 22, 2002**

Prepared by

**Carolyn T. Cohen, Caribbean Area Director, APHIS
Ed Miller, Senior Entomologist, PPD, APHIS**

Submitted by:
Chemonics International Inc.

In association with
Management Systems International, Inc

To:
**United States Agency for International Development
Georgetown, Guyana**

Under Contract No. 504-C-00-99-00009-00

January 2003



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

International
Services
Unit 5527
APO AA 34041

USDA/APHIS/IS
American Embassy Santo Domingo

Dec 31, 2002

Subject: **Trip Report - Guyana/ USAID Consultancy**
To: Tom Whitney, GEO, Georgetown, Guyana

I. TRAVELERS: Carolyn T. Cohen, Caribbean Area Director
Ed Miller, Senior Entomologist, PPD

II. COUNTRIES AND DATES: Guyana, November 18-22, 2002

III. PURPOSE OF TRAVEL: USAID Consultancy “for assistance in identifying the steps necessary and the options available for meeting U.S. phytosanitary requirements for horticultural exports to the U.S.” and “To assist the Government of Guyana and the private sector to identify the steps necessary and discuss options available for meeting U.S. import requirements for agricultural products.”

IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

A. Trip Summary

1. Meetings: The travelers met with Embassy (Commercial/Economic sections, and USAID), USAID Contractor (Chemonics), New Guyana Marketing Corporation (NGMC) and Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock (Minister, Permanent Secretary (PS) and Plant Health Unit (PHU)) personnel the first day. The final day, they met with stakeholders (Ministry, NGMC, exporters, association members, and growers). During the meetings they discussed the regulatory process for approving imports of Guyanese horticultural products into the U.S., current status of commodity entry requests, trapping and surveillance activities in Guyana, possible other crops that might be requested, and economic constraints on small farmers (shipping costs, marketing, air freight space limitations) .

2. Site Visits: The second day, accompanied by PHU and NGMC personnel, the travelers drove to the border with Surinam and observed Port of Entry (POE) clearance of ferry passengers from Surinam, visited several trapping sites, and several small farmers.

3. Training: The final day, they delivered a mini-Pest Risk Assessment (PRA) Training to PHU and NGMC staff.

B. Action items

1. Meetings:

- a. Contact CPHST to determine did they get Guyana response re: PRA
Action-Carolyn (completed, CPHST received Guyana response 6/21/02, format on APHIS website)
- b. Provide APHIS with cutting/rearing information from 1997-2000, showing no Mediterranean Fruit Fly (Medfly)(*Ceratitis capitata*)
Action-Vicky (completed)
- c. Ministry will provide a copy of IICA Fruit Fly (FF)-free report for APHIS
Action-Vicky (completed)
- d. Provide Preclearance Request information to Ministry

Action-Carolyn (completed)

e. Review the FF trapping data and evaluate whether to extend 4 commodities to Southern (SAG) or ALL POEs (peppers, pumpkins, cucumbers, and eggplant)

Action-Ed & PIM/PRA staffs (Ed made recommendations to PIM)

f. Write a formal request specifying the trapping supplies needed

Action-Vicky/PS Balkaran

g. Determine if Guyana will write the PRA or provide the Pest List for three new commodities (Watermelon, Malabar Spinach, Cabbage)

Action-Vicky

h. Request interception data runs on the three new commodities for Surinam, Brazil, Venezuela, & Guyana provide to Ministry

Action-Carolyn (completed)

i. Confer with exporters and producers, then make a formal request for additional commodities to APHIS

Action-Vicky/PS Balkaran

2. Site Visits:

No Action Items

3. Training:

a. Determine if GEO has Training Certificates, if not arrange for APHIS certificates

Action-Carolyn (completed, APHIS will provide after GEO checks spelling of participant name)

b. Start working on pest lists for the new commodities requested

Action-Vicky

C. Trip Details

Background: The Guyanese economy is based primarily on agriculture. Though sugar and rice dominate, there is interest on the part of the private sector and a push from the Government for a diversification of the economy and of the agricultural product base. (The Ministry of Agriculture covers sugar and rice, Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock covers other crops.) Based on a USAID GEO Project sponsored market study in North America as part of the Project's Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) assistance program, USAID felt that there is a potential for increasing the exports of Guyanese fruits and vegetables to the U.S. As an example, in Canada, Guyana exports 40,000 to 50,000 pounds per week of mangoes and 1000 pounds of long beans. In contrast there is essentially no fresh produce going to the U.S. – because Guyana has not been approved for such imports by USDA/APHIS. It is estimated that the Guyanese expatriate population in New York alone is three times that of Toronto's, thus offering a significant market for Guyanese branded products to the Guyanese expatriate community, in addition to the general market for tropical fruit and vegetables.

1. Meetings:

a. With Tom Whitney at GEO, 11/19

- Reviewed the plans for the week
- Provided the materials for the training to Vanessa Devonish, GEO Admin Asst., so she could begin preparing the binders for the participants.

b. USAID weekly meeting, 11/19

- Basically a brief intro to staff
- Purpose of AHIS visit

c. At the Embassy, with the Economic/Commercial Officer, Martin Dale, and Economic/Commercial Specialist, Neromini Fagu, 11/19

- Re: past Ministry proposal to set up an SPS office in Miami, still trying to get more clarification
- GEO helping the Ministry set up a website
- Not a lot of imports, some niche markets, by air, small volumes
 - Guyana interested in organic beef exports
 - Import issues for USDA products include:
 - More products competing with local products
 - Restricting chickens w/ import licenses, increasing tariffs
 - Some food & drugs are sold past their expiration date
- No complaints to the Embassy

d. At IICA with Victorine Kellman, Plant Health, and Winston Gibson, IICA Rep, 11/19

- Dr Gibson arrived 2 weeks ago, reviewing files and programs
 - Old files on Carambola FF (CFF)(*Bactrocera carambolae*), Citrus Mite, Tristeza, other problems
 - Problems can affect export markets
 - Dr. Gibson would like IICA to participate/collaborate on this visit & other USDA projects
- CFF trapping program was executed by IICA, USDA funds ending Dec 02
 - In past, Ministry provided Project Coordinator, lab, fuel (refunded IICA); Regional Program all else
 - If traps not functional, all that's gone before is lost,
 - Maintaining traps is critical because of many borders
 - Informal boats back & forth across river w/ Surinam led to outbreaks in 2 AmerInd villages
 - But eradicated in 98 and still monitor traps
 - Those traps monitored by inspector who lives in Oriella village
 - Traps at the borders, not in Georgetown
 - Plant Health Unit needs money to service traps (staff, gas/fuel, hotel)
 - Now not serviced in a timely manner
 - To get to traps near Brazil (BZ), Venezuela (VZ) borders, need to fly 1 ½ hours, can't drive
- Reporting to Govt
 - Don't lose sustainability, govt needs to follow through
 - Highlight what has been done
 - Then what next
 - Estimate money to maintain traps
 - Point to beneficiaries
 - Now at a point where Govt should take over the project & maintain traps
- Implications for trade w/ US
 - Ministry request adding Southern (SAG) POEs for 4 commodities
 - APHIS Questions re: Medfly in BZ and VZ
 - Some traps, cutting, but need more often

- Most fruit & vegetable (F&V) growing areas along the coast
 - Export to US/EU from the coast
 - Some growing in center, but export to BZ, VZ, informal cross-border trade
 - Nearby Pests of Quarantine concern
 - *Anastrepha grandis* in VZ & southern areas BZ
 - Medfly in BZ & VZ, not Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana
 - CFF in Surinam
 - Ministry will provide APHIS cutting/rearing information from 1997-2000, no Medfly
 - Guyana sent a reply to CPHST re: they would write PRA, never had a response
 - Guyana will need to produce a pest list in either case, will cover in training
- Thursday
- Status of Pink Hibiscus Mealy Bug (PHMB)
 - Had outbreak in 97 (same time discovered CFF)
 - Had cut and burn process at first
 - Imported Ladybird beetles and wasps and released in field
 - Populations dropped
 - Still spreading, but slowly, now wasps spreading w/ PHMB
 - When had PHMB Unit, checked a lot, but when money gone, disbanded the Unit
 - Technicians realized importance of Unit, even though PS disbanded
 - Continue to monitor spread, slowly into farm areas
 - Learned from Grenada's experiences, so they knew what to do w/ IPM when PHMB arrived
 - Had a field insectary, but now no heavily infested material to use in lab
 - Dr. Munroe did field trials w/ Neem (organic) & other chemical controls to lower levels

e. At Ministry with Permanent Secretary Bowhan Balkaran & Victorine Kellman, 11/19

- Past contacts with Carolyn by phone reviewed
 - Change in entry requirements, adding SAG POE for two commodities already
 - This visit will let us consider adding more SAG POEs
- Discussion re: FF, they need to keep up surveillance programs
- Ministry will make APHIS a copy of IICA's Regional FF-free status report
- Wants to set up a tripartite committee for Plant Health (Guyana/BZ, VZ) as they have for FMD
 - Also bilaterals, because of animal and plant health (SPS) threats
 - Country is building a bridge between BZ & Guyana, need to strengthen surveillance there
- Working w/ FAO re: CARICOM on updating, harmonizing regulations
 - Animal & Plant Health, & Food Safety
 - Working hard to strengthen SPS measures
 - Also assistance from Canada for HACCP on fisheries
- Constraints on shipping to US
 - To Canada easier
 - Would be easier, less expensive to ship to MIA, rather than NY
 - Want to increase # of products, working hard to expand range of products
 - Many organic products (sugarcane, beef, cocoa beans) for niche market

- Expanding into aquaculture, esp in rice fields, using organics so don't harm fish
- Have pest lists for many F&V
- Maybe hot peppers are possible, Medfly host, but Guyana Medfly-free
- Post harvest problems
 - Transport from the farm to port/airport
 - Some farmers, indiscriminate use of pesticides/fertilizers
 - Conscious of Food Safety issues
- High shipping costs (\$1US/kilo), even if production costs low
 - So need to produce high value crops to offset transport costs
- Possibly interested in Preclearance Program, Carolyn explained costs, will send information to Ministry

f. At NARI with Plant Health Unit Coordinator Dr. Munroe, Victorine Kellman, & Staff, 11/19

- Ed explained the three things trying to accomplish on this trip
 - Get recent historical data on FF trapping data, so can evaluate changing entry status for 4 Northern (NA) POE to SAG POE commodities (pumpkins, cucumbers, peppers, and eggplant)
 - Give tools to develop pest lists to allow new products (PRA training)
 - Help Ministry & industry focus on new products possibly easier to gain access w/o treatment, most likely candidates for approval, because of Guyana's freedom from Medfly and *A. grandis*
- FF POE Interceptions 1985-2002 provided by Ed and discussed
- Guyana trapping program arrays and findings discussed
 - CFF found in 2 AmerInd villages, eradicated in 1998
 - Currently 62 Jackson Methy Eugenol (Jax ME) traps in Region (Reg) 6 (next to Surinam)+ 29 in Reg 4 (AP to Coast, Termerhi-Georgetown)=91 total
 - Medfly, 37 Jax Tirmedlure (T) in Reg 3,4,5 & 6 (coast Georgetown to Surinam)
 - Did trapping in Reg 1 periodically by boat or plane
 - McPhail, no traps now, til last month had some in Reg 5
 - Found *Anastrepha striata*, *A. serpentina*
 - In past Reg 2, 4&6, along river, border w/ VZ
 - Trouble finding resources (staff, petrol) to service weekly
 - Fruit cutting and rearing data provided to APHIS
 - More cutting in past (9/99-8/00=1042), little now (1/02-11/02=~100)
 - Various years funding for trapping from outside sources (APHIS in 87, IICA 92-3)
- Discussion on other FF
 - APHIS provided a list of non-Central American *Anastrepha* spp.
 - *A. fraterculus* complex, different feeding habits, aggressiveness in different parts of range (MX, C. America, Andes, AR/BZ), possibly in future, divided into some new spp
- Possible new commodities
 - APHIS provided a table with neighboring countries's permissible commodities
 - Explain treatments, ie cold (C/T), irradiation (Caribbean countries have no trained technicians)

- Tomato not an *Anastrepha* host, so could enter pink or red
- Possibly mangosteen, lichee could have niche, also longans, rambutans
- Commercially processed mangoes have easier entry requirements than fresh, whole fruit
- Some commodities are more problematic
 - Beans/peas/pigeon peas have garden pests, leps (ie *Maruca testularis*)
 - Yams need treatment as a condition of entry, internal feeders, borers, (ie *Diaprepes abbreviatus*)
- Are there commercial pepper, cuke, tomato, eggplant growers?
- Yes, plus spinach, bok choy, watermelons, pumpkins
- Shipping problems/high costs
 - By sea, takes ~10 days, Guyana-Barbados-NY or MIA, so no incentive
 - Also, small shipments can't fill container, normal order 1-3 cartons of each commodity
- Pink Hibiscus Mealy Bug (PHMB) discussion
- Found early, so not such a big problem as when arrived in Trinidad or Grenada
 - Made special, semi-autonomous PHMB Unit
 - Used parasites *Anagyrus* (from FAO program) and *Cryptolemus* (bought from USA)
 - Cutting and burning of infected material at first, once under control some small pruning
- Notified trading partners, w/in one year able to trade safely again w/ Antigua & Barbados
 - Certified farms for export, Pest Free Zones
- Then funding for PHMB Unit expired, but do general monitoring and surveillance
- Discussion on what is meant by 'Certified Farms'
 - Over 100 certified farms now, but not all export
 - Systems approach, must be clean to bring produce to packhouse
 - No there legislation, but part of system to allow exports to Barbados
 - Easier to work with those farms, voluntary participation (mandatory for exports to Barb/Anu)
 - Extension service provides information, PHU, PQ Inspectors do inspections
 - Pineapples have second largest growing area, but pests 70% infestation, high level, so no exports
- Other topics discussed
 - PHU working w/ Jessica of FAO on new legislation
 - NGMC's role providing postharvest packing services, paperwork
 - Description of PHU Inspectorate, POEs, legal basis for seizures (through Customs only)

g. Courtesy call with Minister of Agriculture, Satyadeow Sawh; PS Balkaran; NGMC General Manager Nizam Hassan; and Tom 11/19 (press coverage of part)

- Introductions/welcome, overview of visit
- Brief description of meetings
- Words for the press, some Q&A

h. Stakeholders Meeting 11/21 (Attendees included Ministry, NGMC, Exporters, Growers)

- Introductions/Purpose of visit
- Overview of already permitted products, APHIS provided Handout (HO)
- Process for adding new products- described steps, time line, APHIS provided HO
- What Ministry has already requested and status
 - Two already added for SAG (lettuce, dasheen)
 - Four more pending review for adding SAG (peppers, pumpkins, cucumbers, and eggplant)
 - PRAs required for watermelon, Malabar spinach, cabbage
- They should work w/ Ministry, re: which products are of interest for them
 - APHIS provided HO of neighboring countries' enterable commodities for discussion
 - Should also consider shipping constraints/weight restrictions to request most practical commodities
 - Don't expend vast amount of resources on potentially uneconomical/less-saleable products
- Pest information
- Q&A/Comments
 - Breadfruit and peppers to SAG interesting?
 - Herbs are light, high value
 - Prefer to go through Ministry rather than individuals, faster when an official request

i. Wrap-up Meeting, with Vanessa, Vicky 11/21

- Continuing trapping program is important if they wish to export FF host material (commodities)
 - APHIS offered assistance with purchases of trapping supplies
 - Ministry will write a formal request specifying the trapping supplies needed
- Reviewed Objectives
 - APHIS will look at the FF trapping data and evaluate whether to extend the 4 commodities POEs
 - Hope to complete w/in a couple of months, let Guyana know
 - Will allow more POEs for exports
 - Guyana will determine if they will write PRA or provide the Pest List for 3 new commodities
 - PRA Format is on the APHIS Website
 - Vicky will fax her response to CHPST to Carolyn
 - Carolyn will request interception data runs on the three new commodities for Sur, BZ, VZ, Guy
 - If Ministry writes Pest Lists, will send all at once, if writing PRA, will send one at a time
 - Ministry will confer with exporters and producers, then make a formal request for additional commodities

2. Site Visits:

a. FF and Rearing Lab, (1st floor, IICA Building) 11/19

- Has FF trapping records

- Also rearing out FF larvae from fruit collected during trapping visits
- Specimens/collection displayed

b. Field trip with Vicky, other PHU, NGMC staff, 11/20

- Molson's Creek Ferry Crossing with Surinam
 - Cars drive through disinfection bath
 - Some pax inspected, if invited by Customs
 - Some mini-buses go through w/o baggage inspections
 - Traps at Ferry vandalized, so moved
- Trapping sites
 - Jax ME and Jax T
 - Don't enter yards if nobody is at home, return later
- Visit watermelon fields on beach with Candy Thomas, Agricultural Extension Officer
 - Some thrips, leaf miners, worms on leaves
 - Export to Barbados
- Visit other farmers growing watermelons, cukes, eggplant, peppers, tomatoes
 - Some flea beetles, fusarium wilt, thrips, occasional anthracnose, scales, top curling
 - APHIS provided some growers w/ permissible list, neighbor/possibility table

3. PRA Training (8 PHU+3 NGMC), 11/21 :

- Quickly reviewed PRA Training Binder, by chapters (leaving much to be read by participants later)
- Discussion of Guyana's options re: write up own PRA or provide Pest List for new commodities
- Discussion of Pathways
- APHIS Provided CABI Crop Plant Compendium CD for Ministry, and explained its use
 - Demonstration of how to construct a Pest List using CD as initial data source
 - Participants each tried using the CD on the laptop
 - Write a separate Pest List per category (i.e. insects, fungi, viruses, weeds), alphabetically w/in group
- Discussion/Look at Interception Data
 - Also can request data on neighboring countries
 - Use for new commodities and expanding POEs
 - Should explain obscure finds/eradication data in Pest List footnotes
- Discussion of Internet and print sources
- Will be time consuming to write a PRA
- Should use PRA for determining entry status for commodities into Guyana as well as for their exports
- Discussion of WTO/SPS Enquiry Point and Notification Authority
- Feel free to call if they have questions in the future

V. NEW PEOPLE MET

Chemonics/GEO

Tom Whitney, GEO Project Director

Vanessa Devonish, Administrative Assistant
Cedric Sills, Driver

US Embassy, USAID

Mike Sarhan, USAID Mission Director
Daniel Wallace, AID Officer
Martin Dale, Economic/Commercial Officer
Neromini Fagu, Economic/Commercial Specialist

IICA

Winston Gibson, IICA Rep

Ministry of Fisheries, Crops and Livestock

Satyadeow Sawh, Minister
Bowhan Balkaran, Permanent Secretary
Dr. Munroe, Plant Health Unit Coordinator
Victorine Kellman, Asst. Plant Health Unit Coordinator
Caleb Pompey, Supv. Termerhi Quarantine Unit
Olitha Stevenson, Supv. Georgetown Quarantine Unit
Royden Glenn, Quarantine Inspector PHU
Ralph Lovell, Correntyne Inspection Service
Linden Roberts, Quarantine Inspector PHU
Candy Thomas, Extension Officer

NGMC New Guyana Marketing Corporation

Nizam Hassan, General Manager
Daniel Singh, Technical Officer
Michelle Washington, Technical Officer
Rosaline Perkins, Technical Officer

Exporters and Producers

Nan Komar, Watermelon Grower
Jai Pasad, Watermelon Grower
Mr Thompson, Watermelon & Cuke Grower
BiBi F Baksh-Sanchoo, Exporter
Angad Sukhra, Exporter
E. Govindasami, Namyrch Farming Group
Kavim Jabbaar, Caribbean Seafoods, Inc
Deodat S. Doodnauth, Exporter
Lochan Persand, Exporter
Errol Billey, Exporter
R. Singh, Exporter
Rajendra Mohan, Exporter
E. Charles McRae, CanTech, Inc

Carolyn T. Cohen
Caribbean Area Director

cc.: Dale Maki, RD, NACR
Angel Cielo, RD, CA/Screwworm
Carl Castleton, AD Brazil
Mark Knez, AD Canada
Wayne Burnett, PIM Import
Gary Cave, CPHST
Joan Sills, IS/PPQ
John May, RCO, USAID/SDQ
Martin Dale, Econ, US Embassy, Guyana